



# JOHN

**Holland Land Company**

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**What's in a High School Reunion?**

**Fresh Flowers**

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## Welcome to JOHN

Hope you all are preparing for a bright and successful holiday season. This fall was a very busy time. It would be very hard to capture all the adventures we experienced in detail. So this issue will be called, "JOHN, Bits and Pieces" It was great fun, wish I could share everything in detail but that would just be too much to absorb in a single issue.

Without the Holland Land Company, most of western New York would be quite different from what is is today. The Holland Land Office in Batavia, NY is now a museum. I have visited several times, the most recent when Elfreda Stangland, Chapter President of the Niagara Frontier Chapter of the US Daughters of 1812 bestowed a gift from her collection to the museum. I first met Stephan Clarke and his wife Mary at a book signing event in Rochester, NY several years ago. Since Mary and I have ancestor ties, it was with great interest when I found out the Stephan was working on the Hawley family. He shared with me some work in progress and we stayed connected. He has completed his work and it is quite impressive, even for someone without Hawley ties. Please email me for information on how to get a copy.

The Private Edward Centennial Commemoration with a wreath laying ceremony was the devoted work of Kathy Hodges, 1st Vice Regent of the Irondequoit Chapter, DAR. You can view the full event on youtube at this link. [https://youtu.be/qL9XETV\\_R7g](https://youtu.be/qL9XETV_R7g)

The Erie High School reunion was held on September 15/16 in Erie, Colorado. Many thanks go out to all who responded by their attendance or their information even though they could not attend, all were there in spirit.

JAH

Joseph Ellicott was born in Bucks County, Pennsylvania on November 1, 1760. He was the son of Quaker miller Joseph Ellicott (1732–1780) and Judith Blaker (1729–1809). Joseph's siblings included older brother Andrew Ellicott (1754–1820), a fellow surveyor, and younger brother Benjamin Ellicott (1765–1827), a U.S. Congressman.

In 1790, his brother Andrew Ellicott was hired by the federal government to survey the new federal district, where the new capital city of Washington was to be built. Joseph was Andrew's chief assistant during the latter part of the survey. Joseph Ellicott was subsequently sent to Georgia to survey the boundary line, established by treaty with the Creek tribe.



## Holland Land Company

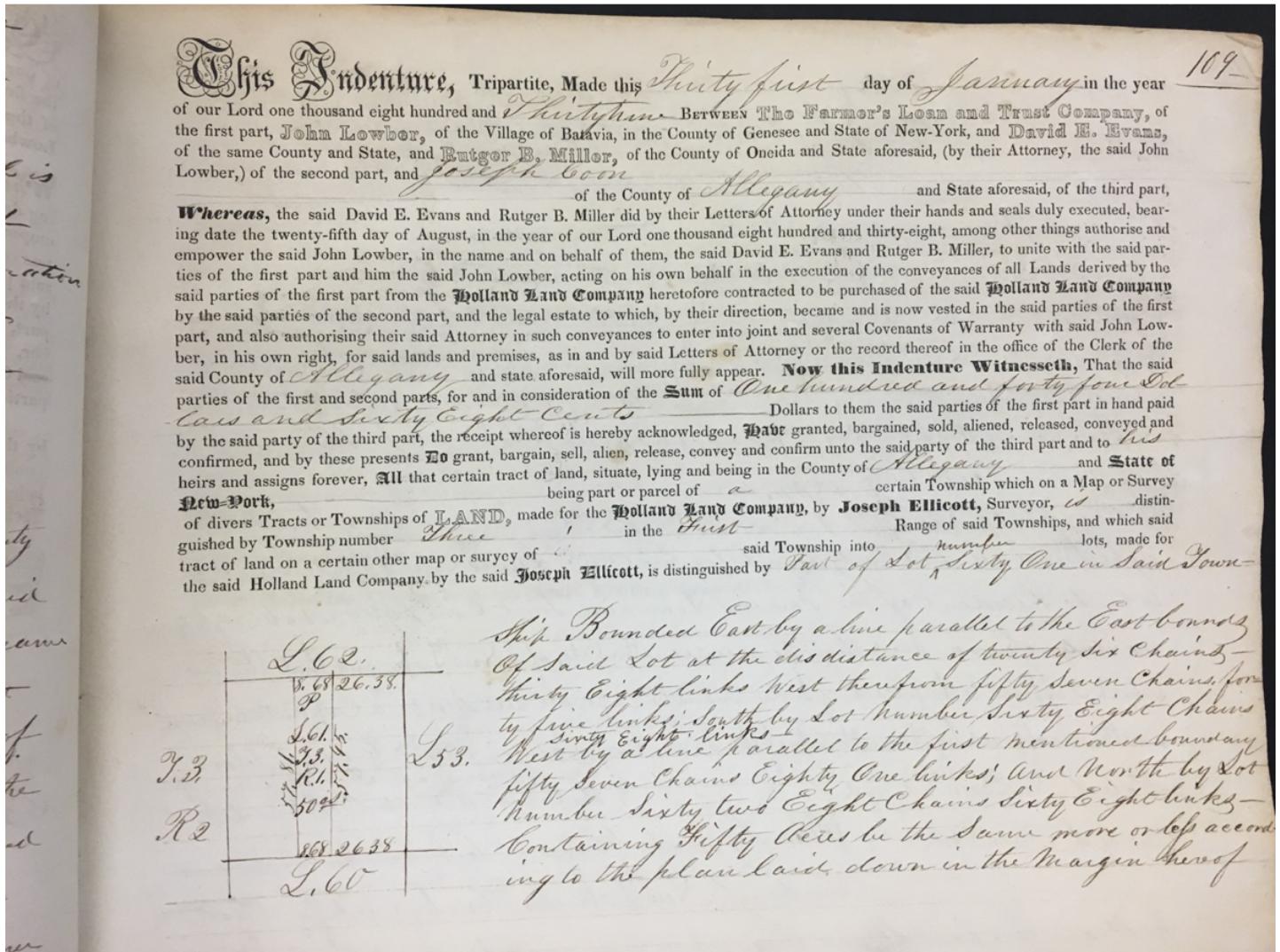
He was then engaged to survey some property in western Pennsylvania which has been purchased by a group of Dutch investors, who had formed the Holland Land Company. He also extended the New York - Pennsylvania border westward. When the company purchased a huge tract of western New York (that became known as The Holland Purchase), Ellicott was hired in 1797 and was sent to perform the monumental task of surveying it. Ellicott spent two years (1798–1800) living outdoors in summer and winter, laying out the townships of the new land in order to complete the Great Survey of the land in October 1800. In 1800, the principal agent of the company, Paolo Busti, gave him a new position as their agent at their headquarters in Batavia, New York. From this office, for the next 21 years he supervised the sales of the tract, with his personal signature on many deeds. Ellicott was an observer for the investors at the Big Tree Treaty when the Senecas sold their rights to the land in Western New York.

In 1801, he laid out Batavia, New York, and in 1804 the village of Buffalo, and established mill sites and communities. He advocated a canal to be built from the Hudson River to Lake Erie, and was among the Erie Canal Commissioners appointed in 1816 to supervise the canal construction, but resigned in 1818 due to ill health. The Erie Canal was finished in 1825. He also arranged for the contribution of more than 100,000 acres (400 km<sup>2</sup>) of company land to this project. As seller and land agent, Ellicott offered generous terms to the buyers, some of whom purchased farms for as little as 25 cents down. When some buyers could not make payments he often extended the terms and sometimes forgave interest if they had made improvements. He offered some selected parcels free upon condition that the buyer would establish a mill or an inn, to help stimulate growth in the area. In later years, Ellicott became the target of complaints by citizens who were unhappy with the land company.

Ellicott was held responsible for the state of New York's decision not to buy up unsold land of the land company, and he retired in 1821. He then attempted to finance the purchase of the unsold land himself, but no one would join his venture, and he had to abandon the plan.



Typical Holland Land deed, this sample is on file at Friendship, NY. Shows the parties involved and the land affected by the transaction.



The **Holland Land Office** building is located on West Main Street (New York state routes 5, 33 and 63) in downtown Batavia, New York, United States. It is a stone building designed by surveyor Joseph Ellicott and erected in the 1810s.

It was the third and last office of the Holland Land Company, which owned almost all of what is today Western New York. Ellicott presided over the survey, sale and ultimate settlement of a vast tract of land. In 1960 it was declared a National Historic Landmark, the first one in Western New York and the only one in Genesee County. Today it is a **museum**, with exhibits about the history of the company and the region.

Today, the Holland Purchase Historical Society, a 501 (c) (3) organization, owns and maintains a significant collection of artifacts that are centuries old, commemorating the history and importance from all areas of Genesee County. The collection includes: prehistoric bones, Native American items, locally connected military equipment, textiles, household goods and industrial objects. The Society's collection is on display in the Holland Land Office Museum, which has periodic exhibit changes to highlight its vast collection.

It was with great pride that Chapter President Elfreda Stangland of the **NIAGARA FRONTIER CHAPTER of the United States Daughters of 1812** presented two framed vintage flag prints from her own private collection to be housed at the Holland Land Company Museum. Assisting her in the presentation was Christine Holley; an associate member of the Niagara Frontier Chapter, who was visiting from New Mexico.



# THE REVEREND SYLVANUS HOLLY: HIS ANCESTORS AND DESCENDANTS



COMPILED AND EDITED BY  
**STEPHAN P. CLARKE**

## From the introduction by Stephan P. Clarke

My work in family history research for my wife's lineage promised to be relatively easy. After all, there were lots of family records, photographs and other data along with a 16-page single-spaced typescript done by a Hawley cousin, Ethel Tozier, in the early 1950s. Mrs. Tozier did a superb job given the constraints of the times and my work was off to a solid start. However, it soon became obvious that there was a great deal to do. This book is the result of about 25 years of research to expand on and develop that beginning. I am pleased to be able to share my work regarding my wife's paternal line, Hawley, Holley, Holly and related families. They are among the most important developers and innovators in the 19th Century America, but most Americans have never heard of them. They contributed greatly to the growth of America as an industrial power and to the westward migration of the 1800s and were leaders in the abolitionist and suffrage movements as well. A primary goal of any genealogical research is to prepare data in the hope that those who read it will learn new bits of history or some of those curious things that illustrate our country's development. That is the goal of this work, too, and if it does not observe standard genealogical organizational practices that is because it is intended as much a family history as a traditional genealogy and it was prepared accordingly. SPC



**Stephan P. Clarke**

Steve is the author of several books including four genealogies. He is a member of the Rochester, NY, Genealogical Society and several lineage societies.

Irondequoit Chapter, NSDAR  
Wreath Laying Ceremony  
In Honor Of

*Private Jewell Howard Edwards*

World War I Veteran  
Who Died in Service  
October 12, 1918



*Centennial Commemoration*

Saturday, October 13, 2018 10:30 a.m.  
Riverside Cemetery  
2650 Lake Ave.  
Rochester, NY 14612

## Pvt. Jewell Howard Edwards

Jewell Howard Edwards was born in 1898 in Pine Bluff, Arkansas. Orphaned very early in life, he was raised by his Aunt Ellen and Uncle John Roberts Edwards in Shelbyville, Shelby County, Texas. His uncle John Edwards was born in Alabama in 1836 and enlisted in the Confederate Army on April 27, 1861.

According to the 1900 census, Edwards, then 12, attended school and worked as a "farm laborer" on the family farm in Shelbyville. On July 6, 1917, at Ft. Sam Houston in Texas, Edwards enlisted in Company D, 28th Infantry, 1st Division of the U. S. Army.

Sometime later he joined the fighting in France, where he was, according to newspaper reports, "wounded and gassed."

When Edwards arrived in Rochester, he was still recovering, yet he insisted on participating in the Fourth Liberty Loan Campaign. Edwards was on the streets of Rochester promoting the Liberty Bonds when he became ill and was transported to the hospital. He died on Saturday, October 12th, 1918.

Edwards died before receiving a final letter from his Aunt Ellen, addressed to Mrs. George(Katherine) Congdon.



Katherine Robinson Congdon, a prospective Irondequoit Chapter member, joined the "War Service Unit, D.A.R." and worked tirelessly to provide comfort and compassion to servicemen. In a tribute to Congdon, War Service Unit Chairman Mrs. Ethel Vance Mosher recalled:

"I remember that she called me, after midnight at the time of Private Edward's death, to ask if we would help her in her arrangements for his funeral and go with her to his burial."

Private Edwards received a full military funeral. The procession was headed by the Kodak Park Band, and included many soldiers from the U.S. School of Aerial Photography at Kodak. Delegates from the DAR and officials of the Red Cross were present. On that day, Irondequoit Chapter laid a wreath at his grave. Mrs. Ida Evans, who had lost a son in the war, raised the needed funds for a gravestone, and in May of 1919, a ceremony dedicating Edward's stone was held. Evans went on to organize Corps No. 1 of the Gold Star Mothers in Rochester, NY



## What is in a High School reunion?

The Erie High School reunion was held on September 15, 2018 in Erie, Colorado. It was a time and opportunity for old classmates to meet again and share. For some it meant that it was almost 60 years since they graduated from high school, with several it was more than 60 years since graduation.

I guess my journey with this event started with some casual conversations with those who were still connected with me. Most of the early talks were centered with those who had passed on, I guess this was the easiest talking point for us.

With a leap of faith and the support offered, I embarked on a project to bring as many former classmates together as I could. Realizing that communication would be the most important venue for this effort, I began to put the word out. I was fortunate to have the support of the Erie Historical Society and was able to establish a reunion event that would be held at the Erie Biscuit Day. We ended up with a booth at this event right next to the Erie Historical Society's setup.

My first challenge was to identify anyone who attended Erie High School prior to 1970. With the use of Erie year books, a list of 232 potential attendees were identified. I knew that some of these had already died and others would probably care less about getting together with former classmates.

The first project and the saddest (although I didn't realize it at the time) was to find those classmates that were no longer with us. The memory board that was prepared included 44 names after a lot of searching, with the realization that some have been missed, but at a point my searching resources just ran out.

The next challenge was to start a communications set that could possibly reach all the remaining classmates. Still chuckle a little bit about those who don't have email, but snail mail worked fine.

As the tasks unfolded, the scheduled program for the actual reunion turned into three separate events during the September 15th weekend.

In the weeks leading up to the reunion, I found myself talking with former classmates that I had not spoken with in many, many years. In each one of these delightful talks, I quickly picked up the voice and mannerisms of the person I was talking that quickly brought back years of high school memories. Erie High School graduates in the 50s were kids that started school together in the first grade and studied, played and enjoyed each other for at least 12 years. To say that we really knew each other was an understatement. Small towns do that to people and Erie was a good example with less than a thousand people and one main street! The Erie High School reunion of 2018 was held and enjoyed by over 60 former classmates and their spouses and friends. The Biscuit day weather was hot, but we enjoyed the time with all who attended. The reunion dinner held that night gave all of us a chance to really re-new our friendships from days gone by; the next day and thanks to Alan and Sarah Wise at the Wise Homestead Museum, we had one more chance to say goodbye while enjoying a meaningful piece of local history so fondly maintained by Sarah and Alan.

So what is in a high school reunion? It is a lot of things, but most importantly it is a time to reflect on where we came from as well as being able to see your former classmates in a much different light. We all are much older now and we have all changed, but those few moments when we remember together an event from our earlier years becomes priceless to each and every one of us.

So I will leave the question to each one of you to decide if it is worth it to share and re-live in a small way the times that helped form who we were to become. It took me 61 years to relive my school years with my classmates, I waited much too long. My hope is that you do not. JAH

ONE NIGHT ONLY

ERIC HIGH SCHOOL

REUNION PARTY

NOW PLAYING



# FRESH FLOWERS



It is strange that the years teach us patience; that the shorter our time, the greater our capacity for waiting.

*Elizabeth Taylor*